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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/660,404	09/12/2000	Ejler L. Sorensen	1137U101	6670

7590 12/18/2002

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CANADA

EXAMINER

PARADISO, JOHN ROGER

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3721

DATE MAILED: 12/18/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/660,404

Applicant(s)

SORENSEN, EJLER L.

Examiner

John R. Paradiso

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 October 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 and 5-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-3, 5-9 and 16-20 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 10-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

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DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election without traverse of Group II, claims 10-15, in Paper No. 7 is acknowledged.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 10-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over BIRK (US 4211056) in view of GOLDBERG ET AL (US 5186515).

BIRK discloses an apparatus for placing grouped containers (J) into cartons (C). The containers, once they are grouped, are seized by grippers (38), each gripper consisting of a gripper body having a first clamp bar (38a) and a second clamp bar (38b) which are moved toward each other to clamp the tops of the rows of cartons. (See BIRK columns 3-5 and figures 2 and 8.)

BIRK does not disclose each set of clamp bars being slidably connected to slide rods which move the clamp bars toward and away from each other.

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GOLDBERG ET AL discloses a gripper with a first clamp bar (12) connected to a first shaft (44) and a second clamp bar (20) connected to a second shaft (46). The first shaft goes through a bearing opening in the second clamp bar and, likewise, the second shaft goes through a bearing opening in the first clamp bar. The motor (42) causes the first and second shaft to move the clamp bars toward and away from each other as desired.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the shaft system and grippers taught by GOLDBERG ET AL in the invention of BIRK in order to provide more grip strength, enabling heavy (or filled) cartons to be lifted with more security.

Reference Citations

4. The following prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to Applicant's disclosure:

- NIES discloses a clamping system for grouped milk containers.
- QUAYLE discloses a gripper with two slidable shafts.
- ROHNER discloses a clamping system for grouped articles.
- KAMPHUES discloses a clamping system for rows of grouped articles.
- SEABERG discloses a clamping system for rows of grouped articles.
- BERTINI discloses a gripper with slidable shafts.

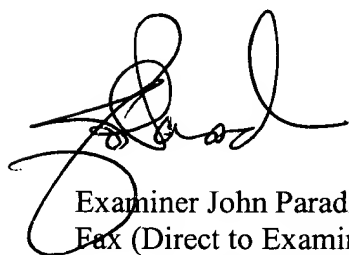
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Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John Paradiso. The examiner can normally be reached Monday-Friday, 9:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. (ET).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rinaldi Rada, can be reached at the number listed below.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the 3700 Technology Center receptionist.



Examiner John Paradiso (703) 308-2825
Fax (Direct to Examiner): (703) 746-3253
Supervisor Rinaldi Rada (703) 308-2187
Receptionist (703) 308-1148

December 16, 2002